

POWER BOAT FLEETS IN BAHAMAS LOAD UP MYSTERY RUM SHIPS

Yacht Club Colors Seen in
Booze Harbors as Pirate
Craft Stow Cargoes.

BOOTLEGGING POPULAR

Motley Crew of Adventurers
From Many Parts of Coun-
try Mans the Industry.

MURDERS ONLY TRIFLING

Liquor Runners See No Harm
in Slaying Dry Spies—Ba-
cardi Rum Is \$20 a Case.

Herewith is published the second of a series of articles by a NEW YORK HERALD correspondent setting forth the results of his investigation of the shipment of liquor to the United States from the Bahamas Islands. The first article developed the fact that there has been an average weekly shipment of 10,000 cases of liquor. The article published to-day describes the scenes attending the loading of the so-called "mystery ships."

Special Despatch to THE NEW YORK HERALD, NASSAU, N. P., Bahamas Islands, Aug. 22.—"Now when we get to West End," said Longling, "let me do the talking. Don't you say nothing until we're there for a while and then don't say much. Just you listen and look. Just keep following around. Maybe I'll get out of sight now and then, but old River Jordan here will stick with you—sort of guiding you."

"I'm going to say that you've come down from New York looking for a chance to buy a boat for folks you represent. You want a boat and have your eye on one over in Florida somewhere. They won't give a damn about that. You sort of want to get in idea how much it's going to cost you to get a schooner full of booze up Long Island way. Leave it to me at first. I know the north. Twelve years fishing out of Gloucester and five on the Grand Banks out of Newfoundland. "Better not let 'em know you're a reporter, although I don't think they'd give a damn except that there were a bunch of Jacksonville reporters over in Miami last year and they didn't help Bimini much. Better let me do the talking at first. You just listen and look, see. And don't commit your word. You ain't got a boat yet. You'll find a lot of these big heads to make a dicker for a schooner, cargo and all. But don't you commit yourself. It's a tough bunch. Old River Jordan here will sort of walk around with you until you get the hang of things."

On a Motor Boat to Gun Cay.

We were beyond Sandy Cay and had passed Jack McCutcheon's Salt Cay when Skipper Longling, by no means one of those taciturn Captains of marine tradition, unfolded the above advice upon "this New York Herald reporter who had chartered his motor boat for an educational pilgrimage from Nassau to Grand Bahama and Gun Cay. The skipper's crew consisted of River Jordan, leader of the choir in the Fox Hill African Third Church, and James, River Jordan's son, who, being but 16 and inclined to frivolity, had not yet established himself in Nassau's church circles.

River Jordan knew the channels and reefs so well that he could man the wheel successfully without so much as glancing at the compass. He could steer his long, black bony fingers around the spokes, throw back his pear shaped head and whine Gospel songs until his eyes showed nothing but white. And instinctively, it seemed, he kept in blue water, avoiding the shallow white and running clear of all the thousand and one reefs and shoals that make the trip from Nassau to the western edge of the Grand Bahama Banks 100 miles of adventure.

"You understand, River Jordan, don't you," said Skipper Longling, "all you got to do is stick to this gentleman until I tell you something different." The old boy's reply was characteristic. He seemed never to be able to make straightforward answers. Always they were suggestive of lodge ritual and almost always interwoven with or accompanied by a snatch of religious music. "Cap'n boss man, yaseuh. Ain't we learn heah on yearth to trust an' obey, we ain't learn nuthin'."

Take up yo' head, yo' epileptic man. Let's go to Eszpy' lan." If you will take down your atlas and turn to the map of the West Indies you will observe the Bahaman line scattered like castoff fragments of Cuba and Hayti from a point north of the Dominican Republic to the western tip of Grand Bahama—Settlement Point—about forty-five miles east of Palm Beach. Any apprehension that we would be conspicuous in West End or Settlement Point was abandoned the moment we bounced upon the beach. Bounced is the proper word. When the sea is feeling restive you don't sail from Nassau to West End, you bounce.

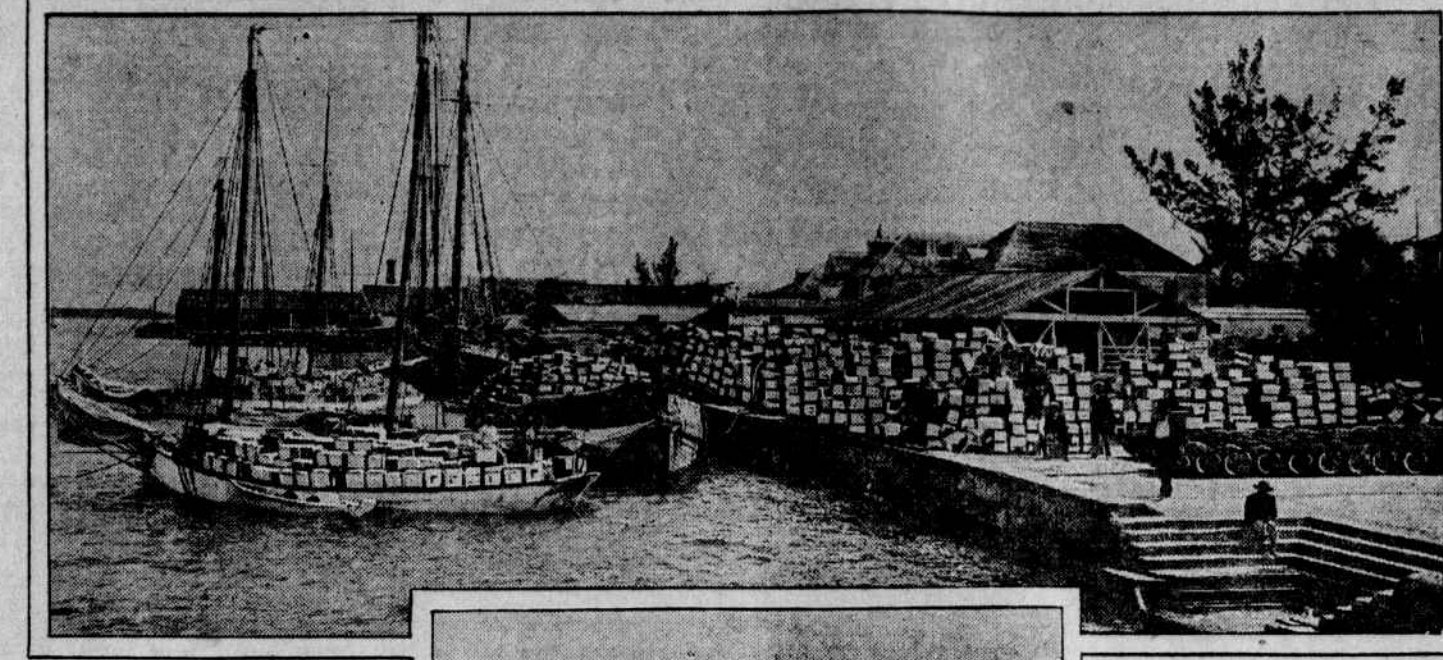
Fleet of Power Craft Waiting. There were about forty or fifty power boats riding at anchor along the shore. They comprised almost every type and condition of small power craft, from one big fellow that once was a submarine chaser to narrow, spindling sloops (or what the ignorant reporter would call a sloop), to trig launches brave in burnished brass, holystoned decks, mahogany cabin and expensive lines that indicated speed was extraordinary power.

Out at sea—200 yards or more—lotted three capacious schooners. They looked like the big 100 and 150 ton fishing schooners that one sees on the Grand Banks. Subsequently the reporter learned that they were just that. Tar-paulins artlessly concealed their names. Casual queries regarding those names bore little success.

"The big one astern there?" replied a moist, fat man in the dirtiest Palm Beach suit on the island. "Damfino, James Wighin or something."

From all of the nine ramshackle

Piers and Schooners at Nassau Piled With Liquor for the United States



warehouses chanting negroes were rolling barrels of whiskey and tugging cases of gin. The white men loafed around the West End Liquor Shop drinking beer. Five motor boats were relaying the barrels and cases to the Isaac Wighin or whatever its name was. There was no excitement, no effort at secrecy, no haste. The big schooner was not due to sail until midnight, and it was only 6 o'clock in the evening.

Natives Chant Continuously.

The chanting was endless. They sang while they took their fish and rice. They sang while they toiled gunnysack bags of bottled goods on their heads. These gunnysack bags were stowed away upon the smaller, faster boats that were going to take their luck between thumb and forefinger (if you will concede a boat a thumb and forefinger) and run for one of the thousands of dark, treacherous gulfs to be rescued later on.

Negro women worked beside their men folk. They sang, too—a weird obbligato to the fervent mounting chanting. Then there were larger power boats, sixty footers, destined for the nasty trip around Key West and up the western coast of Florida to somewhere near Tampa, or on up to Apalachicola Bay or Pensacola, or even New Orleans and Galveston. That they are successful is apparent to any visitor to Florida and the Gulf ports. You can buy perfectly good Johnny Walker and Haig & Haig in Jacksonville for \$4 and \$5 a quart.

But the main interest, of course, was centered in the two big schooners that were to pull out for the North Atlantic coast within a few hours and become mystery ships. The interest seemed to be the sole property of The New York Herald reporter, however, because nobody else along the beach displayed any.

"The smaller schooner," explained a man known as Richie, "is booked for somewhere off the Virginia coast. A Jew and a Greek from Savannah are putting up the money. It's a hell of a combination. They fight most of the time, but they've made \$500,000 in a year. Where are you from?"

"New York? Have you noticed the New York Yacht Club colors down this way?" No? Well, we see 'em often. Some of the biggest private yachts that ever dropped anchor in New York harbor make trips down this way these days. Mr. — a big yacht took on 500 cases of whiskey and champagne in the yacht basin off the west end of New Providence a couple of weeks ago. You know him, I guess. And then there was the case of Scotch. Oh, there are ten millionaires I could name whose private yachts have been down here to take on stuff for their private use. Anybody who has the boat and the money can get it. And everybody's in the game. Look at that bunch."

College Youngsters Drink Rum.

He swept his arm in an arc that took in the crews, the dispatchers, the wholesalers' agents, the gang bosses and the rest of the white crew. Drinking rum and lime juice were four young fellows from a Southern State college. Three of them were husky lads who talked about athletics and the coming football season. The fourth was an under-sized, intellectual looking chap with horn rimmed spectacles. They all wore exceedingly dirty flannels. Their conversation, forced upon you, revealed that they were running their own cargoes in a power boat that lay among those close in shore. They had experienced considerable excitement.

"There's been too much talk," said the boy with the spectacles. He seemed to be the leader. "The newspapers have been arousing a great deal of sentiment against authorities who don't make arrests. Bobo Dean's no expert over in Miami has been the worst. He's drier than Bryan."

Nearby sat a hulking individual who violently had been a professional boxer, where, for he still wore his badge of office on his braces. That was the inspiration of much wit. "When business gets bad you turn copper again," laughed the fat man in the filthy Palm Beach suit. "Maybe you'll have to pinch yourself."

"If my luck holds out for another month," replied the ex-cop, "I'll never look at a policeman again. I'll be hiring cops to guard my dough."

Further on there was a group of substantial looking citizens who were listening to what sounded like a report on various activities of prohibition enforcement agents in the States. A short, plethoric fellow whom they addressed as "Counselor" was doing the reporting.

Waiting Until Dries Calm Down.

"It's going to tighten up for a while, and then when the dries calm down it will be all right again," he said. "There's well to go up in Jacksonville. They've pinched Sheriff Dowling and Hopkins, the automobile man. They pinched Wheeler, the banker, too. But they've got to prove bootlegging before they send a man to jail on an indictment charging it."

"Devil and Bobo Dean are raising so much hell over in Miami that things will be quiet for a while. The Government is getting sore about these schooners running up the coast. Somebody's going to get in bad."

"Well, if it goes all the way up we won't be the only ones," interrupted a man with a yachting cap and denim overalls. "Washington's not the driest place in the States."

"Hell, no," resumed the Counselor, "and that, in the last analysis, lets us out."

Wandering from warehouse to warehouse one gathered the impression that, despite the storm signals from the States, this is the time to buy whiskey. It was never cheaper, and it is entirely likely that it never will be so cheap again. Calvert, Old Durham, Old Drum, Cedarbrook, Melwood and Jefferson whiskeys (all American brands) were



Large illustration above shows sailing vessels at Nassau just loaded with cases of liquor from British sources for transfer at some outlying Bahama island to mystery ships bound for United States. Lower picture is of American booze in cases and barrels on a pier ready to start back to this country.

to be had for from \$20 to \$40 a case. British and Canadian whiskeys were offered for \$25, \$30 and \$35 a case. London-New York Gordon dry gin, bottled in Nassau, was on sale at \$1 a bottle. There was little call for anything else. "We have champagnes and fine wines aplenty," explained an importer's agent. "But that's staple goods. We can sell all that we can lay our hands on at fancy prices to the millionaires who send their private yachts for it. It don't pay to ship it to the bootleggers. The common run of folks don't want champagne. They want hooch."

Bacardi Rum \$20 a Case.

Jamaica rum and Bacardi rum, scandalously diluted, were being shipped in small quantities. They were purchasable at either Gun Cay, Settlement Point or at Nassau for \$20 a case. There was a man wandering about hawking a yacht. He had salvaged it, a wreck, somewhere near Stirrup's Cay light and boasted that he had spent \$10,000 in putting it into shape again. Business was not brisk.

"Six months ago," he lamented, "I'd have been fighting the bidders off. Now I'm scaring them off by asking \$20,000 for an eighty footer that can ride any sea and do fifteen knots under bad conditions. I got a lot of money tied up in that yacht."

Promptly at midnight the schooner Isaac Wighin, or whatever her name was, got under way for a point somewhere at sea.

"She'll anchor outside the three mile limit somewhere up North and the little fellows will get busy," explained the counselor, who had become quite friendly. "There's nothing to this at all. No laws broken or anything like that. The trouble now is that we have to wait and see what the courts are going to decide in this business of the revenue cutters prying ships outside the three mile limit. If the courts say that the American Government has no right to capture British vessels outside the limit the business will flourish more than ever. Anyway, we're taking it easy for a while."

"Naturally, none of the stuff is flying the American flag. That would be inviting disaster. But it's easy enough to change from American registry to British. If Washington denies that let them come down here and see it being done. Call in my office in Miami on your way North. We'll have a little talk."

On a much smaller scale the conditions on Gun Cay were similar. There are no great warehouses. The liquor is piled upon the beach or rolled into huts and caves. It's a port of quick transfer. Small boats and dinghies and they scoot up the coast as far as Savannah. Three times a week or so, a big schooner anchors off Gun Cay and the little fellows cargo her. She will carry from one to 2,000 cases.

And because it is a touch and go business at Gun Cay, the risk is greater. You have to be tough to succeed. They

published to-morrow will vividly describe the recent "bootleggers' ball," echoes of which are still ringing through the Bahamas.

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LIQUOR SHIPS ARE SAFE 12 MILES OFF U. S. SHORE

'N. Y. Herald's' Expose Interests Washington Officials.

Special Despatch to THE NEW YORK HERALD, Washington, D. C., Aug. 22.—

Coincident with The New York Herald's expose of gigantic liquor smuggling operations between the Bahamas and the United States, Department of Justice officials stated to-night that there is no way for the Government to reach the smugglers outside a twelve mile zone off American shores. Liquor ships, they said, were at liberty to transfer their cargoes or sell them at will without danger of interference from customs or prohibition authorities.

Attaches of the Department of Justice were at work to-day digging into old statutes, but they failed to find anything that changed the former ruling of the Department fixing the twelve mile limit for American jurisdiction over contraband goods, whatever their character.

Department officials expressed interest in the revelations of The New York Herald's exclusive recital of liquor operations between Nassau and other points in the Bahama Islands. They said that, so far as they could discern there is at present no way of stopping these operations, so long as the ships bearing the whiskey and wine cargoes do not come within the twelve mile limit of American shores.

Some of the higher officials, talking frankly of the existing international treaties, were disposed to doubt that the ruling issued by the Department some time ago would hold in view of the protest of Great Britain attacking the right of the United States to overhaul ships of foreign registry outside the three mile limit.

Secretary of the Treasury Mellon was emphatic on this score. He said with some vigor that if existing statutes stir up rows with foreign Powers they must be changed by amendment.

PANAMA ZONE CALLED SOLE AMERICAN 'OASIS'

Borders So Near to People That All Get Liquor.

The Panama Canal Zone is the single piece of territory beneath the United States flag where prohibition is a theory and not a condition, says Theodore McGinnis of Panama City.

Mr. McGinnis, who owns a brewery in Panama City, was a passenger on the Essequibo, which reached port yesterday. He explained that anybody who lives in the canal zone can reach its borders so easily that there is no bootlegging and nothing for enforcement men to do. He is a member of a golf club which moved its clubhouse over the border after prohibition, so its members might have former comforts of club life.

PRICES realized on Swift & Company sale of canvas bed in New York City for week ending Saturday, August 20, on shipments sold out, ranged from 8 cents to 19 cents per pound, and averaged 15.00 cents per pound.

SUITS TO FORCE TAX FROM BOOTLEGGERS

Federal Attorney Plans Move
to Punish Dealers With
Two Statutes.

LIQUOR CHARGES LATER

Scotchman Who Hadn't Heard
of Dry Law Tells Police He
Cannot Get a Drink.

Wallace J. Collins, Acting United States Attorney, announced yesterday in Brooklyn that he will begin a John Doe investigation in a few days to compel bootleggers to pay income taxes on the profits derived from deals in liquor. When this is done, said Mr. Collins, the bootleggers will then be confronted with two charges—one for violating the Volstead act, the other for making false statements in connection with their income tax returns.

"It is a matter of common knowledge," asserted Mr. Collins, "that liquor men have made thousands of dollars in booze and that they have not entered these profits on their income tax returns, both for fear of criminal prosecution and because they thought they could evade paying the tax."

"I will consult the Internal Revenue Collector here and ask him to put his field men on the trail and check up their actual profits as compared with the statements made on the returns to the Government. Then we will be ready for a John Doe investigation of the entire matter."

Seeks Bank Accounts.

Mr. Collins said he would furnish to the Internal Revenue Collector, Mr. Rafferty, a list of the names of the most important bootleggers. After the internal revenue men have filed reports Mr. Collins will subpoena the bootleggers' bank accounts and safe deposit box contents and use what he has gleaned in the John Doe proceedings.

Ignatius La Placa of 5 Monroe street, a pugilist of the 115 pound class, faced Magistrate Corrigan in Tombs Court on a charge of having in his possession a half pint of whiskey on Saturday night. He had been arrested by Detective Philip Cronin of the First Inspection district. "I use this kind of liquor for a rub down," La Placa testified. "I have had it four years, which is just before I took up pugilism."

La Placa was held in \$500. Sandy Duncan, Scottish seaman, made a voyage to this country four years ago as one of the crew of a steamship carrying munitions for the British Government. At that time Sandy had no trouble in procuring Scotch whiskey here. A tramp steamer reached Brooklyn on Saturday and on board was Sandy Duncan, making his second visit to the United States. Yesterday he had shore leave and at Fulton and Middagh street, Brooklyn, he entered a saloon.

"What will you have?" asked the barkeeper. "A wee bit of the best Scotch in your public house," smiled Sandy, placing his foot on the rail and left elbow on the bar.

"Nothing doing," said the barkeeper.

Complains to Police.

Sandy's eyes opened wide in surprise. "I don't believe you," he said. "I have heard of discrimination against the colored race, and of course a coon can't get a drink in Shanghai, but this is the first time I have ever heard of a Scotchman being treated like this. I am going to the police and make a complaint about you."

A very irate Sandy stamped into the office of John Sullivan, acting captain of the Poplar street station. It took the police officer fifteen minutes to convince Sandy that prohibition was really in effect, at least in Brooklyn.

"Back to the land of Bobbie Burns for this laddie," said Sandy, heading back for his ship.

WANT TOBACCO FOR DISABLED.

WASHINGTON, Aug. 22.—Cigars and cigarettes seized by the Government for tax delinquency instead of being destroyed when their value is not equal to the tax would be turned over to hospitals in which disabled war veterans were quartered under a bill reported to-day by the House Ways and Means Committee.

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